

My name is Joseph Firine and I am a member of the not for profit For Cameron here in New Haven. I would like to speak on Raised Bill No. 5430 AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOIDS.

Let me preface my testimony by saying I agree with and support this raised bill.

I understand this is a short session and you are trying to get through as much as you can in some kind of abbreviated version to at least get the ball rolling but this raised bill does not even touch the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Fentanyl, which is disappointing to me.

I am pleased to see this does address the negative social stigma associated with substance use disorder in our State. I do want to say it is about time this is being taken care of and I applaud your effort.

I am surprised there is nothing here to address Fentanyl test strips, expanded free Narcan distribution and education, expanded crisis support, harsher penalties for dealing Fentanyl and expanded treatment services to just name a few. I respectfully suggest you all look at this through a different set of eyes. You are attempting to address the opioid crisis in CT but ignoring the most important part—Pressed pills and Fentanyl. An opioid task force similar to our gun task force needs to be formed. I am not suggesting “arresting our way out of this crisis” What we are doing now, in all aspects, just does not work.

Look at it this way, if Cameron left work and bought a bottle of what he thought was tequila from a co-worker and it turned out his co-worker knowingly sold him a bottle of rat poison and he died, someone would be in prison now. Why is it any different if someone sells a pressed pill knowingly disguised as Oxycontin but is actually Fentanyl?

I have attached a summary of our presentation to some of our lawmakers.

Don't forget, by the time this gets to you from yesterday, 10 people in CT will die from an overdose.

Thank you for your time and all the work you do for the State of Connecticut.

Joseph Firine
47 Clark Street
New Haven, CT. 06511